



JOSEPH D. EARLY, JR.
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
MIDDLE DISTRICT

WORCESTER COUNTY COURTHOUSE
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS 01608
www.worcesterda.com

TELEPHONE
755-8601
AREA CODE 508

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For Immediate Release
Contact: Tim Connolly 508-368-7236
Or 508-688-5565

Three Teens Indicted in Suburban Fires

WORCESTER – Two Shrewsbury teenagers were indicted by a Worcester County Grand Jury today on a variety charges stemming from a fire that destroyed six businesses in the Northborough Shopping Center, according to Worcester District Attorney Joseph D. Early Jr.

The two defendants were joined by a third Shrewsbury teenager in indictments alleging they firebombed a teacher's car in Shrewsbury.

The Grand Jury returned 14 indictments against Nicholas Couture, 18, of 33 Cross St., Shrewsbury: burning a building; malicious explosion; malicious damage to a motor vehicle; breaking and entering in the nighttime with intent to commit a felony; injury to a depository; larceny in a building; larceny over \$250; three counts of larceny under \$250; two counts of intimidating a witness; attempted larceny; and willful throwing or placing of explosives.

The Grand Jury returned 11 indictments against Matthew Cramer, 18 of Gage Lane, Shrewsbury: willful throwing or placing of explosives; malicious damage to a motor vehicle; burning a building; breaking and entering in the nighttime with intent to commit a felony; injury to a depository; larceny in a building; conspiracy; three counts of larceny under \$250; and malicious explosion.

The Grand Jury also indicted Evan Brown, 17, of 31 Ball St., Shrewsbury on charges of malicious damage to a motor vehicle; malicious explosion; and willful throwing or placing of explosives.

Couture and Brown are both being held without bail. Cramer will be summoned to court to face the charges. All three face arraignment in Worcester Superior Court next month. A

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specific date has not been set. Brown, who was 16 and therefore a juvenile at time of his alleged participation in the crimes, was indicted under the Youth Offender statute and will be tried as an adult.

The three defendants are charged in the firebombing of a teacher's car in Shrewsbury in March. Less than a week later, Couture and Cramer allegedly broke into O'Brien's 5 and 10 Store in the Northborough Shopping Plaza, stole cash and a large quantity of Massachusetts Lottery tickets and then set the store on fire. The resulting five-alarm fire destroyed plaza and caused an estimated \$2 million in losses.